

protect themselves from criminal liability. It is quite conceivable that discussions involving scientific terms for other bodily parts will no longer be allowed for fear they might offend a user and land the service in court.

Guaranteeing the Internet is free of speech restrictions, other than the statutory restrictions on obscenity and pornography which already exist, should be of concern to all Americans who want to be able to freely discuss issues of importance to them regardless of whether others might view those statements as offensive or distasteful.

Shifting political views about what types of speech are unsuitable should not be allowed to determine what is or is not an appropriate use of electronic communications. While the current target of our political climate is indecent speech—the so-called seven dirty words—a weakening of First Amendment protections could lead to the censorship of other crucial types of speech, including religious expression and political dissent.

I believe the censorship of the Internet is a perilous road for the Congress to walk down. It sets a dangerous precedent for First Amendment protections and it is unclear where that road will end.

I urge the conferees to reject restrictions on constitutionally protected speech when the full conference committee votes on this legislation.●

#### NOMINATIONS RE-REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the navy nominations beginning with Brian G. Buck (Reference PN715), which was favorably reported by the Committee on Armed Services and placed on the executive calendar on December 5, 1995, be re-referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ICC TERMINATION ACT

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives on H.R. 2539, a bill to abolish the Interstate Commerce Commission, to amend subtitle IV of title 49, United States Code, to reform economic regulation of transportation, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

*Resolved*, That the House disagree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2539) entitled "An Act to abolish the Interstate Commerce Commission, to amend subtitle IV of title 49, United States Code, to reform economic regulation of transportation, and for other purposes", and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

*Ordered*, That the following Members be the managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of the House bill, and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. Shuster, Mr. Clinger, Mr. Petri, Mr. Coble, Ms. Molinari, Mr. Oberstar, Mr. Rahall, and Mr. Lipinski.

From the Committee on the Judiciary, for consideration of the House bill, and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. Hyde, Mr. Moorhead, and Mr. Conyers.

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, I move that the Senate insist on its amendment, agree to the request of the House for a conference, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate.

The motion was agreed to, and the Presiding Officer appointed Mr. PRESSLER, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. BURNS, Mr. LOTT, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. INOUE, Mr. EXON, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Mr. BREAUX conferees on the part of the Senate.

#### MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES TO SENATE RESOLUTION 158

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Senate Resolution 198 submitted earlier today by Senators LOTT and MCCAIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 198) to make certain technical changes to S. Res. 158.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Under current Senate rules, a Member, officer, or employee may accept travel reimbursement from a foreign government or foreign educational or charitable organization. Will a Member, officer, or employee be permitted to continue participating in such programs under the new gift rule?

Mr. LEVIN. Yes. The new gift rule, effective January 1, 1996, will, however, change the current approval process. Now, a Member, officer, or employee must receive prior approval of the Ethics Committee in order to participate in such travel. After January 1, the Member, officer, or employee will no longer be required to seek authorization from the Ethics Committee. An employee, however, must obtain authorization from the Member or officer for whom he or she works.

Mr. MCCONNELL. So the absence of a separate section in the new gift rule addressing foreign-sponsored travel does not mean foreign-sponsored travel has been prohibited?

Mr. LEVIN. To the contrary, foreign-sponsored travel is treated like any

other travel: so long as it is in connection with the duties of the Member, officer, or employee; it is not substantially recreational in nature; it is not provided by a registered lobbyist or foreign agent; and it is properly disclosed, and authorized, in the case of an employee, reimbursement for expenses connected with such travel may be accepted.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I appreciate the clarification.

Section 1(c)(9) of the new gift rule creates an exception from the gift limitation for informational material sent to a Senate office. The current practice in the Senate also permits the receipt of informational material with some limitations. First, the material must be provided by the person or entity which produces, publishes, or creates the informational material. Second, current practice also permits those who produce, publish, or create the material to provide a set of books, tapes, or discs. For example, several years ago PBS provided each Senator with a set of video tapes of its series, "The Civil War." However, the Senate does not permit a Senator to accept a collection of materials, such as a specialized reporting service or other collections issues periodically. For example, a Member could not receive a set of encyclopedias, or the U.S. Code Annotated. Is it the intent to incorporate these limitations within the new gift rule?

Mr. LEVIN. Yes, the exception for informational materials is intended to foster communication with the Senate. Items such as books, tapes, and magazine subscriptions may continue to be received in the office, so long as they were provided by the author, publisher, or producer and so long as the informational materials did not constitute a specialized reporting service or other collection of the type you have described.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the Senator for the clarification. The new gift rule contains an exception for employment benefits, such as a pension plan. It permits a Member, officer, or employee to participate in an employee welfare and benefits plan maintained by a former employer. Current Senate rules and practice also permit such continued participation, with one limitation. To the extent a Member, officer, or employee participates in such a plan of a former employer, the participant may not accept continued contributions from that former employer. Is it intended that the new gift rule incorporate this current Senate practice?

Mr. LEVIN. Yes, I say to the Senator. It is our intent that a Member, officer, or employee be permitted to maintain his or her participation in a plan, but not to receive continued contributions from a former employer.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I appreciate the clarification.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I rise to clarify that the resolution we are about to pass contains only technical